

CHAPTER 50

Qâf

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 *sections*; 45 *verses*)

This chapter takes its name from its initial letter *Qâf*, calling attention to the greatness of the power of the Divine Being, and deals with the Resurrection, both with the spiritual resurrection of this life and the greater Resurrection of the life after death. The first section draws attention to the testimony of nature, and to there being a lesson in the fate of former peoples; the second shows that every action has a consequence and these consequences are made manifest on the day of Judgment; and the third states that the good and the bad must each receive their due, and that a resurrection will be brought about in this life as well as in the Hereafter. In fact, the judgment and resurrection of this life are inseparably mingled with the Judgment and Resurrection of the next throughout this chapter.

From here to the 56th chapter, there is a group of seven Makkan chapters, all belonging to the early Makkan period, and all laying stress on the ultimate triumph of Truth and the fact that Divine Judgment would soon come to pass.

SECTION 1: The Resurrection

In the name of Allâh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

1 *Qâf* – By the glorious Qur’ân!^a

2 Nay, they wonder that a warner has come to them from among themselves; so the disbelievers say: This is a wonderful thing!

3 When we die and become dust — that is a far return.

4 We know indeed what the earth diminishes of them and with Us is a book that preserves.^a

5 Nay, they reject the Truth when it comes to them, so they are in a state of confusion.^a

6 Do they not look at the sky above them? — How We have made it and adorned it and it has no gaps.

7 And the earth, We have spread it out, and cast therein mountains, and We have made to grow therein of every beautiful kind —

8 To give sight and as a reminder to every servant who turns (to Allâh).

9 And We send down from the clouds water abounding in good, then We cause to grow thereby gardens and the grain that is reaped,

10 And the tall palm-trees having flower spikes piled one above another —

11 A sustenance for the servants, and We give life thereby to a dead land.

Thus is the rising.^a

12 Before them the people of Nûh rejected (the Truth) and (so did) the dwellers of al-Rass and Thamûd

1a. An expression of wonder at the disbelief of people. The whole of the Qur'ân is spoken of as one book even at this early period. Here the Qur'ân is called *majîd* or *glorious*; elsewhere it is called *karîm* or *bounteous* (56:77) and *hakîm* or *full of wisdom* (36:2).

4a. *What the earth diminishes* is the body, dust going to dust. *The book that preserves* is the record of the deeds which a human being has done. The consequences of deeds are preserved in their entirety and out of them grow a new life in the Resurrection.

5a. Their confusion is due to the rejection of truth. They were in a state of confusion as to what name to give the Prophet — they called him first a dreamer, then a poet, then a madman, then an enchanter, then a forger and liar, and so on.

11a. The *khurûj*, or *rising*, here includes both the religious resurrection of a dead people in this life and also the greater Resurrection in a life after death.

13 And 'Âd and Pharaoh and Lût's brethren,

14 And the dwellers of the grove and the people of Tubba'.^a They all rejected the messengers, so My threat came to pass.

15 Were We then fatigued with the first creation? Yet they are in doubt about a new creation.^a

SECTION 2: The Resurrection

16 And certainly We created human beings, and We know what their mind suggests to them — and We are nearer to them than their life-vein.

17 When the two receivers receive, sitting on the right and on the left,

18 He utters not a word but there is by them a watcher at hand.^a

19 And the stupor of death comes in truth; that is what you wouldst shun.

20 And the trumpet is blown. That is the day of threatening.

21 And every *nafs* comes, with it a driver and a witness.^a

22 Thou wast indeed heedless of this, but now We have removed from you your veil, so your sight is sharp this day.^a

14a. For the dwellers of al-Rass, see 25:38a; for dwellers of the grove, 15:78a; for Tubba', 44:37a.

15a. The meaning is that Allâh did not lack power in dealing with the former generations so that they should doubt His power in dealing with a new one. Or, the first creation is the physical creation of human beings, and the second creation their religious regeneration.

18a. The three verses impress upon human beings that all their deeds and words bear fruit, that nothing is said or done in vain. The *yamîn*, or the *right side*, represents the *good*, and the *shimâl*, or the *left side*, the *evil* (*Tâj al-'Arûs* (Dictionary), by *Imâm Muhibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faîd Murtadâ*).

21a. The *driver* signifies the *impeller to evil*, and the *witness* the *caller to Truth*.

23 And his companion will say: This is what is ready with me.^a

24 Cast into hell every ungrateful, rebellious one,^a

- 25 Forbider of good, exceder of limits, doubter,
 26 Who sets up another deity with Allâh, so cast him into severe chastisement.
 27 His companion will say: Our *Rabb*, I did not cause him to rebel but he himself went far in error.
 28 He will say: Dispute not in My presence, and indeed I gave you warning beforehand.
 29 My sentence cannot be changed, nor am I in the least unjust to the servants.

SECTION 3: The Resurrection

30 On the day when We say to hell:
 Are you filled up? And it will say: Are there any more?^a

22a. This verse shows clearly that the consequences of evil actions which remain hidden from the eye of human beings in this life are made manifest after death. This is the significance of the sight being made sharp, so that human beings will then see what they are unable to see here. Such is hell, according to the teachings of the Qur'ân, viz., the hidden consequences of evil deeds, when made manifest to a man, become his hell.

23a. By *qarîn*, or the *companion*, is meant the *evil companion*, or the *shaitân*, at whose suggestion human beings commits evil deeds. *What is ready* is the record of human being's evil deeds, which will be palpably manifest to them on the day of Resurrection.

24a. The dual form used in *alqiyâ* ("cast") is either due to the address being to the two, the driver and the witness of verse 21, or the dual is used simply to give emphasis to the order, as if it conveyed a repetition of the order (*Kashshâf* (Commentary), by Abu-l-Qâsim Maḥmûd ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhsharî).

30a. It is a metaphorical expression. One people after another continue in their wickedness without taking a lesson from the fate of the previous people. It is also an expression of human being's desire to have more and more of wealth and material comfort.

31 And the Garden is brought near for those who guard against evil — (it is) not distant.^a

32 This is what you are promised — for everyone turning (to Allâh), keeping (the limits) —

33 Who fears the Beneficent in secret, and comes with a penitent heart:

34 Enter it in peace. That is the day of abiding.

35 For them therein is all they wish, and with Us is yet more.^a

36 And how many a generation We destroyed before them who were mightier in prowess than they! So they went about in the lands. Is there a place of refuge?

37 Surely there is a reminder in this for him or her who has a heart or he gives ear and is a witness.

38 And certainly We created the *samâwât* and the earth and what is between them in six periods, and no fatigue touched Us.^a

39 So bear with what they say, and celebrate the praise of your *Rabb* before the rising of the sun and before the setting.

31a. If human beings used their inner sight, they could see that the keeping from evil and the doing of good brought them nearer and nearer to true happiness, for which the Garden stands here, in this very life.

35a. This is to show that the doing of good gives human beings all that they desires. But as their desires are limited, they are told that Allâh will give those more than they desires. This is explained by some as meaning the sight of the Divine Being, which is the highest blessing of the next life.

38a. The Bible says: “And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made” (Genesis 2:2). The act of taking rest applies to one who is tired, and hence the Qur’ân negatives any such idea in relation to Allâh, Who does not stand in need of rest; hence it says: *No fatigue touched Us*. For the creation of the samâwât and the earth in six periods or six days, see 7:54a.

40 And glorify Him in the night and after prostration.^a

41 And listen on the day when the crier cries from a near place —

42 The day when they hear the cry in truth. That is the day of coming forth.^a

43 Surely We give life and cause to die, and to Us is the eventual coming —

44 The day when the earth cleaves asunder from them, hastening forth.

That is a gathering easy to Us.

45 We know best what they say, and thou art not one to compel them. So remind by means of the Qur’ân him who fears My threat.^a

40a. *Sujûd* or *prostration* here stands for prayer. The significance is that one should not get tired of glorifying Allâh; prayer is in its entirety a glorification of Allâh, but even after prayer, one should continue the glorification of Allâh.

42a. The *munâd*, or the *crier*, is the Prophet: see 3:193, where the Prophet is plainly spoken of as being the crier: “Our *Rabb*, surely we have heard a Crier calling to the Faith, saying: Believe in your *Rabb*”. This cry was a distant cry at first, but, as we are told in the previous verse, it will be a cry from a near place in the end, so that people will listen to it in truth, as we are told here. Note that the religious resurrection to be brought about in this life by the Prophet is spoken of in the whole of this chapter, along with the greater Resurrection of the next life.

45a. The words, *you are not one to compel them*, refer plainly to the religious resurrection, which the Prophet desired to see immediately; he is told that he will see the dead coming to life but he could not compel people to accept the truth. The cleaving asunder of the earth in the previous verse and their hastening forth to life religious and their gathering in Islâm were all witnessed in the lifetime of the Prophet, and may be witnessed again in the near future. Note that this religious resurrection does not mean that there would be no Resurrection after death. On the other hand, it is treated as an evidence of the greater Resurrection, and that is the reason why both resurrections are spoken of in the same words.